

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MASS,PFOR, IN, UK
SUBJECT: BRITISH ARMS SALES TO INDIA

1. FCO SOUTH ASIAN DEPARTMENT HEAD CHALMERS TELLS US THAT BRITISH HAVE DEFINITIVELY REFUSED INDIAN REQUEST TO BUY JAGUAR STRIKE AIRCRAFT. WHILE OVERTONES OF NUCLEAR USES PROBABLY WERE INVOLVED IN THE DECISION, THE MAIN REASON WAS THAT INDIA WANTED CREDIT AND THE BRITISH COULD NOT ENVISAGE THE LARGE AMOUNTS INVOLVED, PROBABLY 350 MILLION POUNDS STERLING OR MORE. WHILE CHALMERS WAS UNCERTAIN AS TO EXACT NUMBERS, HE THOUGHT REQUEST WAS FOR ABOUT 30 JAGUARS INITIALLY WITH VARIOUS ARRANGEMENTS FOR MANUFACTURING PARTS IN INDIA.

2. ON OTHER HAND BRITISH ARE IN THE PROCESS OF AGREEING TO SMALLER AMOUNT OF CREDIT (SOMEWHERE IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF 24 TO 30 MILLION POUNDS STERLING) FOR TWO CORVETTES FOR INDIAN NAVY. THERE IS POSSIBILITY OF INDIA'S ORDERING TWO MORE TO BE BUILT IN UK FOR THEM. CREDIT WOULD

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BE FOR ABOUT FIVE YEARS AFTER THEY WERE BUILT, AND IS

COMPARABLE TO WHAT THE FRENCH WOULD OFFER INDIANS.

3. INDIANS HAVE ALSO MADE REQUESTS FOR RB-199 AIRCRAFT ENGINE, PART OF MRCA NATO PROJECT. BRITISH WOULD HAVE TO OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM GERMANS AND ITALIANS WHO ARE CO-PRODUCERS TO SELL TO INDIANS. SINCE CREDIT IS INVOLVED IN THIS REQUEST TOO, BRITISH ARE DISCOURAGING THE INDIANS.

SPIERS

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NNN

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